

May 8, 2019

Nurses Week: Recognizing Nurses as Crucial to Health Care

Nurses demonstrate compassion in action



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Martin County, FL - Across Florida, there are thousands of nurses with a passion and commitment to care for others in their greatest times of need. They are the healing hands that work tirelessly to ensure that each patient, adult or child, receives safe, quality health care.

This week, May 6 through May 12, the Florida Department of Health in Martin County is joining partners across the community to celebrate National Nurses Week and highlight the diverse ways nurses are working to improve health care. Today, there are more than 400,000 nursing professionals in Florida who play a vital role in maintaining the health of Floridians.

"I am so proud of the work that our public health nurses do for our community," said Carolann Wegener-Vitani, Interim Health Officer for the Florida Department of Health in Martin County. "The work can be challenging and take place under some difficult circumstances, such as responding to an outbreak of disease or caring for residents in a shelter during a hurricane. Regardless of the difficulties, you can count on nurses to rise to the occasion and take care of the people in need."

Public Health nurses are dedicated to promoting and protecting health through prevention education and counseling, providing immunizations and clinic services as well as conducting disease surveillance and investigation. Nurses with the Florida Department of Health in Martin County work in our Public Health clinics, in our schools, with families through the *Healthy Start* program and with residents through many of our social service organizations.

Nursing: The Most Trusted Profession in the Country

Nurses make up a large portion of Florida's health care workforce. Almost everyone has had an interaction with a nurse, whether it be in a hospital, health clinic, private practice, home care setting or school environment where nurses are often the primary caregivers and patient advocates.

According to [Gallup's 2018 Honesty and Ethics Survey](#), more than four in five Americans (84%) rate the honesty and ethical standards of nurses as "very high" or "high," earning them the top spot among a diverse list of professions for the 17th consecutive year. With the exception of

2001, when firefighters were on the list after the 9/11 terrorist attacks, nurses have far outpaced all other professions since their addition to the list two decades ago.

Governor DeSantis recently signed two proclamations acknowledging the importance and efforts of Florida's nurses in [health care](#) and [school settings](#).

School Nurses Vital to Student Health, In and Out of School

Martin County also recognizes Wednesday, May 8 as School Nurse Day- a day to recognize Florida's more than 1,178 registered professional school nurses for the important work they do on behalf of students. School nurses are an essential component to the health and well-being of students, particularly those with acute and chronic health conditions.

During the 2017-2018 school year, Florida's school health nurses served more than 2.8 million students and supervised more than 25 million services to keep Florida's students safe and healthy while at school. For many of these students, without nursing services, attendance would decrease or students would be unable to attend school.

School health nurses with the Florida Department of Health in Martin County work in all 22 Martin County Public Schools providing training for school district clinic assistants and staff. School health nurses also provide case management and health screenings for students. The school health program is supported through state and local funding including the Children's Services Council of Martin County, the Martin County School District and Martin County Government.

About the Florida Department of Health

The department, nationally accredited by the [Public Health Accreditation Board](#), works to protect, promote and improve the health of all people in Florida through integrated state, county and community efforts.

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